

Message Text

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CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK VA
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 11546

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, MPOL, OCON
SUBJECT: FUTURE STATUS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE (AHC) ON
EQUIPMENT INTEROPERABILITY

REF: STATE 274217 DTG 160052ZNOV77
SUMMARY: ALLIES WERE NEITHER HOSTILE TO NOR STRONGLY SUP-
PORTIVE OF US SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE ROLE OF AHC ON EQUIPMENT
INTEROPERABILITY. GIVEN THAT ALL CONSIDERED US WAS PRO-
POSING A NEW ROLE FOR THE COMMITTEE, WE JUDGE REACTIONS
RELATIVELY FAVORABLE AND OPEN-MINDED. ASSUMING ALLIES'
INSTRUCTED REACTIONS ARE SIMILAR TO THEIR PREMILIMARY ONES,
WE BELIEVE US PROPOSAL HAS ENOUGH OF A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS
TO WARRANT OUR PRESENTING IT FORMALLY AT NOVEMBER 23 AHC
MEETING. HOWEVER, WE WILL NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE CONCERNING
PROCEDURES BY WHICH COMMITTEE WILL UNDERTAKE TASKS IN THE
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FUTURE AND WILL NEED TO HAVE FALLBACK POSITIONS IN HAND.
END SUMMARY.

1. DN NOVEMBER 16-17, DCM (GLITMAN) DISCUSSED THE FUTURE
OF THE AHC WITH HIS FRENCH, BRITISH, DUTCH, AND GERMAN
COUNTERPARTS AND WITH DSYG PANSA AND ASYG (DEFENSE SUPPORT)
WALSH. DRAWING ON TALKING POINTS CONTAINED IN REFTEL, DCM

STRESSED THAT THE US VIEW WAS THAT THE AHC HAD BEEN TOO USEFUL IN SURFACING SEVERAL IMPORTANT POLITICAL ISSUES TO JUST LET IT SLIDE BACK INTO SOME UNSPECIFIED DORMANCY. AT THIS STAGE, THE AHC COULD SHIFT ITS EMPHASIS FROM THE TECHNICAL ISSUES OF THE PAST TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY ON POLITICAL ISSUES FOR THE COUNCIL. IT COULD CONCENTRATE ON FACILITATING THE CNAD/NAC INTERFACE BY NARROWING DOWN THE REAL POLITICAL OR TECHNO/POLITICAL ISSUES FOR THE COUNCIL TO DEAL BETTER WITH THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, IF A PROBLEM SHOULD SURFACE IN A CNAD REPORT CONCERNING PAPS/ NAPR, AC/94, OR FOLLOW-ON TO THE LONG TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM, THE AHC COULD STAFF OUT THE ISSUE FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL.

2. FRENCH DCM (JESSEL) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES FAVORED CONTINUING THE AHC TO WORK PROBLEMS OF INTEROPERABILITY. JESSEL NOTED US SEEMED TO BE IMPLYING A LARGER ROLE AND STATED HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE PRECISE ON THE QUESTION OF INTEROPERABILITY PROBLEMS ONLY. HOWEVER, HE PERSONALLY UNDERSTOOD THERE MIGHT BE AN ADVANTAGE IN HAVING A POLITICAL BODY ACT AS A FACILITATOR FOR PROBLEMS ARISING IN COMMITTEES DEALING WITH TECHNICAL ISSUES SUCH AS THE CNAD. DCM REMINDED JESSEL THAT THE FRENCH PARTICIPATE IN PAPS WORK WHICH EXTENDS BEYOND INTEROPERABILITY QUESTIONS. JESSEL SAID THAT, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT, THERE WERE MANY ASPECTS OF THE PAPS WORK WHICH ADDRESSED INTEROPERABILITY

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AND HE IMPLIED THAT THE REAL FRENCH INTEREST IN PAPS WAS LIMITED TO INTEROPERABILITY ASPECTS. JESSEL ENDED BY SAYING HE BELIEVED HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD BE FLEXIBLE ON THE ENTIRE ISSUE AS THE SPECIFIC US PROPOSALS ARE DEVELOPED BUT THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE A DECISION ON WHAT THE US WAS PROPOSING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE AHC COULD BE REACHED IN TIME FOR MINISTERS IN DECEMBER.

3. BRITISH DCM (HOLMER) SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES BELIEVED THE AHC HAD DONE GOOD WORK BUT THAT IT WAS THE END OF THE RACE. CONCEIVABLY, THE AHC COULD BE REVITALIZED IF NATO RAN INTO SHOALS AGAIN ON INTEROPERABILITY PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED THE US PROPOSAL WAS MOVING WELL BEYOND INTEROPERABILITY PROBLEMS AND THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE AHC, AND EVEN THE NAME OF THE COMMITTEE, WOULD NEED TO BE CHANGED. HE AGREED THAT A COMMITTEE TO SORT OUT THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF DEFENSE PROBLEMS, NOT YET RIPE FOR THE COUNCIL, COULD BE USEFUL. HE BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THERE WOULD BE DIFFICULTY IN TWO AREAS: (1) BRINGING THE FRENCH ALONG; AND (2) FRAMING THE TOR FOR THE COMMITTEE IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WOULD NOT DOWNGRADE THE CNAD BY APPEARING TO STAND BETWEEN IT AND THE NAC. HOLMER SAID HE WOULD SEEK

GUIDANCE FROM HIS AUTHORITIES ON THE US IDEAS AND STRESSED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO REACH A DECISION IN THE AHC BEFORE THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL. HE THOUGHT PERHAPS THE AHC COULD RECOMMEND TO MINISTERS THAT PERMREPS BE CHARGED TO CONSIDER THE FEASIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF THE US PROPOSAL AND REPORT IN THE SPRING 1978.

4. DUTCH DCM (BUWALDA) SAID THAT IF THE ALLIANCE HAD THE WILL TO DO WHAT THE US WAS PROPOSING, THEY COULD FIND A PROCEDURE TO ACCOMPLISH IT. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED DUTCH

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NAD'S BASIC OBJECTION THAT THE AHC NOT BE SEEN AS IN ANY WAY STANDING BETWEEN CNAD AND NAC. THUS, IF US PROPOSAL WAS PERCEIVED AS EITHER AUTOMOTIC OR GRADUAL INTERVENING BY THE AHC BETWEEN THE CNAD AND THE NAC, DUTCH WOULD OPPOSE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE AHC WERE TASKED BY THE NAC TO REVIEW SPECIFIC CNAD PROBLEMS, DELINEATE THEIR CONTENT, AND PERHAPS SUGGEST METHODS FOR ALTERNATIVES FOR THEIR RESOLUTION, DUTCH MIGHT GO ALONG. MOREOVER, HE STATED THAT THE PROPOSAL SEEMED TO GO BEYOND INTEROPERABILITY. IF SO, NEW TOR WOULD BE NECESSARY AND IN EFFECT A NEW COMMITTEE WOULD BE FORMED. IN ANY EVENT HE BELIEVED A DECISION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE AT THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL.

5. GERMAN DCM (BOSS) SAID HE BELIEVED, PERSONALLY, THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD THING TO HAVE SUCH A COMMITTEE; HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT BONN NAD MIGHT VIEW IT AS AN APPEALS BODY AND CONFIDENTIAL

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WOULD BE AGAINST THAT CONCEPT. DCM ASSURED HIM THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF MAKING THE AHC AN APPEALS BODY NOR ONE TO INTERFERE WITH THE CNAD. BOSS SAID HE WOULD TRY IT ON BONN AND LET GLITMAN KNOW THE REACTION.

6. ASYG (DEFENSE SUPPORT) WALSH SAID HE COULD SEE WHERE A COMMITTEE OF SUCH A NATURE COULD BE HELPFUL WHEN A TECHNICAL PROBLEM REACHES THE BUBBLING POINT AND POLITICAL WILL IS INVOLVED. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WAS NEUTRAL ON THE FUTURE OF THE AHC.

7. DSYG PANSA SAID THAT, BASED ON THE LIMITED DETAILS AVAILABLE, HE COULD SEE A USEFUL ROLE FOR SUCH A COMMITTEE, BUT NOT A NEED FOR ONE. THE SHOCK EFFECT OF THE AHC HAS PASSED AND THE COMMITTEE SHOULD, THEREFORE, AWAIT A FURTHER MINISTERIAL CALL. BY PLACING THE AHC IN DORMANT STATUS, IT WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO MINISTERS AS AN INSTRUMENT IF THEY SAW THE NEED. HE SAID THAT THE FRENCH WERE IN THE AHC AND THIS WAS ALSO AN IMPORTANT REASON FOR KEEPING THE AHC IN EXISTENCE, ALBEIT DORMANT. HE ENDED BY SAYING HE COULD GO ALONG WITH THE US SUGGESTIONS IF THE NATIONS DID SO.

8. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CANADIAN DCM, WE DISCUSSED THE US THINKING ON THE AHC WITH THE COUNSELLOR FOR PRODUCTION AND ARMAMENTS (MCNAUGHTON), WHO IS ALSO THE ALTERNATE CDN REP TO THE AHC. WASHINGTON WILL RECALL THAT, FOR THE PAST YEAR, CANADA HAS CONSISTENTLY ARGUED TO TERMINATE THE AHC. MCNAUGHTON SAID HE HAD NO NEW INSTRUCTIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE AHC. HOWEVER, HE HAD RECENTLY RECOMMENDED TO HIS AUTHORITIES THAT CDN FALL BACK TO A SUPPORT FOR DORMANCY. HE BELIEVES THE US APPROACH APPEARS TO CONCEDE THE CURRENT WORK OF THE AHC WAS ENDED BECAUSE THE EMPHASIS WAS ON MOVING FROM THE TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE PAST TO POLITICAL ISSUES. IN ADDITION, THE US IDEAS SEEMED TO GO BEYOND CONFIDENTIAL

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INTEROPERABILITY. MCNAUGHTON AGREED THAT A COMMITTEE OF THE TYPE ENVISIONED BY THE US COULD BE HELPFUL; BUT HE VIEWED IT AS CONSTITUTING A DIFFERENT COMMITTEE. FINALLY, HE DID NOT SEE HOW AGREEMENT TO THE US PROPOSAL COULD BE REACHED IN TIME FOR THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL MEETING.

9. COMMENT. CERTAIN ELEMENTS WERE CLEAR THROUGHOUT ALL THE DISCUSSIONS:

- A. ALL PERCEIVED THE US CONCEPT AS GOING FAR ENOUGH BEYOND INTEROPERABILITY TO CONSTITUTE A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW COMMITTEE.
- B. PUTTING ASIDE THE NATURE OF THE AHC'S ROLE, ALL WONDERED HOW THE US PROPOSAL WOULD DIFFER PROCEDURALLY FROM THE DORMANT STATUS ALREADY PROPOSED. THAT IS, IF THE AHC STOOD BY AWAITING PROBLEMS TO SURFACE, WOULD IT NOT BE SOME FORM OF DORMANCY WHATEVER NAME WAS GIVEN TO IT?
- C. WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE FRENCH, WHO DESPITE THEIR INTEREST IN PAPS SEEM TO WANT TO RETAIN INTEROPERABILITY AS THE SINGLE AIM OF THE AHC, THE OTHERS, ACKNOWLEDGING POSSIBLE PROBLEMS OF GETTING THE FRENCH TO GO ALONG AND GETTING THEIR OWN CAPITALS TO SEE IT AS NOT INTERFERING WITH CNAD, WERE NOT UNFAVORABLE IN PRINCIPLE TO THE US PROPOSAL.
- D. ALL WERE CONFIDENT THAT A DECISION COULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE ACHIEVED IN TIME FOR THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL.

10. THE IS HAS RESCHEDULED THE AHC MEETING FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23. WE RECOMMEND THE US PUT FORWARD ITS PROPOSAL.

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IT WOULD BE PRUDENT, HOWEVER, TO BE FLEXIBLE ON THE TRIGGERING MECHANISM WHICH WOULD ACTIVATE THE COMMITTEE, I.E., WHETHER IT SHOULD BE AT THE CALL OF THE SYG, THE NAC, ANY MEMBER NATION, OR AT THE ASYG LEVEL OF THE SECRETARIAT.

11. WE WILL ALSO NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE ON (A) PUSHING FOR MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT THIS DECEMBER, OR PUTTING IT OFF UNTIL THE SPRING DPC, (B) ON TERMS OF REFERENCE (IF NEW ONES ARE DEEMED NECESSARY) AND (C) ON ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION.

12. WE SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED WITH FALLBACK POSITIONS AND SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING: (1) DORMANCY ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT ANY MEMBER COUNTRY ON THE COMMITTEE OR THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COULD REACTIVATE THE COMMITTEE TO DEAL WITH PARTICULAR PROBLEMS AND (2) AS A FINAL FALLBACK,
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DORMANCY SUBJECT TO REACTIVATION BY THE COUNCIL OR THE SECRETARY GENERAL.

13. UNDER ANY OF THE THREE APPROACHES (NEW PROPOSAL, DORMANCY 1 AND DORMANCY 2), WE WOULD ARGUE THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH UNFINISHED WORK SUCH AS THE FUELS ISSUE AND THAT COMMITTEE COULD BE TASKED TO PERFORM ANY SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH AROSE DURING PERIOD OF CONSIDERATION OF ITS FUTURE STATUS. UNDER EITHER OF THE FALLBACK POSITIONS, WE WOULD ARGUE THAT THE COMMITTEE MEET AFTER THE SPRING SUMMIT TO REVIEW WHAT ROLE IT MIGHT PLAY IN FACILITATING LTDP FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES.

14. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE BY OOB BRUSSELS
TIME NOVEMBER 22. GLITMAN

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Message Attributes

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